

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 298870

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: NATO, MARR, SP

SUBJECT: SPANISH WAR COLLEGE -- STATE DEPARTMENT BRIEFINGS

1. THE SPANISH WAR COLLEGE GROUP RECEIVED A FULL DAY OF BRIEFINGS AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT MONDAY, DECEMBER 6 UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY LAINGEN. THE COUNSELOR OF THE DEPARTMENT, MR. SONNENFELDT, OPENED WITH A CONCISE REVIEW OF CURRENT EAST-WEST RELATIONS, WITH EMPHASIS ON THE CONTINUED IMPORTANCE OF A CREDIBLE WESTERN DEFENSE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR PARALLEL EFFORTS TO ENCOURAGE CONSTRUCTIVE SOVIET BEHAVIOR. MR. BARTHOLOMEW, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF POLICY PLANNING, SPOKE ON GLOBAL ISSUES OF RESOURCES AND NON-PROLIFERATION, AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST, AND THE SUBSEQUENT IMPORTANCE OF BROADER ATLANTIC COOPERATION. MESSRS. LAINGEN AND ALBRECHT (EUR/RPE) CLOSED THE MORNING SESSION WITH A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF US OBJECTIVES IN EUROPE
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AND EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. THE AUDIENCE WAS GENERALLY

RECEPTIVE TO THE BROAD, POLICY-ORIENTED APPROACH TAKEN BY THE MORNING SPEAKERS AND RESPONDED WITH OCCASIONALLY POINTED QUESTIONS ABOUT EUROPEAN SECURITY ISSUES WHICH REVEALED DOUBTS ABOUT THE DIRECT MILITARY BENEFITS FOR SPAIN FROM NATO MEMBERSHIP AND A STRONG DESIRE TO AVOID THE APPEARANCE OF BEING A PETITIONER FOR ANYTHING FROM THE ALLIANCE.

2. NEAR NOON THE GROUP WAS BROKEN INTO FIVE GROUPS OF 5-6 WHICH MET IN THE OFFICES OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARIES LOWENSTEIN, LAINGEN AND ARMITAGE, MR. BARTHOLOMEW AND WESTERN EUROPEAN DIRECTOR BARBOUR FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS. AFTER LUNCH THE FULL GROUP RECONVENED TO MEET WITH A PANEL OF EXPERTS ON EUROPEAN DEFENSE AND CONSISTING OF MESSRS. NEWHOUSE (ACDA), GOODBY (PM), AND LEHOVICH (RPM). THE DISCUSSIONS FOCUSED ON THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF MAJOR DEFENSE ISSUES -- SALT, MBFR, AND CSCE FOLLOW-UP. MOST OF THE FAIRLY LONG AFTERNOON QUESTION-AND-ANSWER PERIOD WAS DEVOTED TO INFORMATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL QUERIES. THE ISSUES OF MOST INTEREST TO THE VISITORS, BOTH IN SMALL GROUPS AND IN THE FULL SESSIONS, WERE GIBRALTAR, CEUTA AND MELILLA AND EUROCOMMUNISM. (DIRECTOR GENERAL-DESIGNATE ELIAS PUT SPECIAL WEIGHT ON THE ISSUE OF GIBRALTAR AS AN OBSTACLE TO A SPANISH DECISION TO SEEK NATO MEMBERSHIP.)

3. COMMENT: OUR BRIEFINGS WERE INTENDED TO GIVE THE GROUP AN APPRECIATION OF THE BROADER POLITICAL FUNCTIONS OF THE ALLIANCE IN ORDER TO COMPLEMENT THE BRIEFINGS ON MILITARY AFFAIRS PROVIDED ELSEWHERE ON THIS TRIP. HOWEVER, TO JUDGE FROM INFORMAL COMMENTS FROM SOME OF ITS MORE SENIOR MEMBERS, THE GROUP APPEARS TO HAVE LEFT WITH ITS DOUBTS ABOUT THE MILITARY VALUE OF NATO TO SPAIN GENERALLY INTACT. THE GROUP MAY WELL ENDORSE OPTIONS SHORT OF FULL NATO MEMBERSHIP. ROBINSON

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